



### 2.0 OPERATING ENVIRONMENT

This section provides an overview of the operating environment in which MDT provides transit service. The primary areas of focus include analysis of existing demographics, economic conditions, and land use patterns. These factors are presented in an effort to create a description of Miami-Dade County and measure the extent to which MDT service effectively meets the transportation needs of the county.

# 2.1 Service Area Description

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, Miami-Dade County encompasses a total area of 2,431 square miles. Approximately 1,946 square miles (80%) of the County is land and 485 square miles (20%) is comprised of water, most of which is Biscayne Bay and another significant portion being the adjacent waters of the Atlantic Ocean. Miami-Dade County borders two national parks. Biscayne National Park is located east of the mainland, in Biscayne Bay, and the western third of Miami-Dade County lies within Everglades National Park.

The Urban Area is approximately 493 square miles of which MDT's service area covers approximately 306 square miles or 62 percent (62%) (Figure 2-1). Miami-Dade County as a whole is composed of 34 individual municipalities (Islandia was formerly a city, and was unincorporated in 2012).

#### 2.1.1 Land Use

Existing land use for Miami-Dade County is classified by eleven (11) categories: Residential, Commercial and Service, (Hotel-Motel) Transient-Residential, Industrial, Institutional, Parks and Recreation, Transportation, Communication and Utilities, Agriculture, Vacant/Undeveloped Land, Inland Waters, and Coastal Water Bays and Ocean (Figure 2-2). Land uses comprising the largest proportion of Miami-Dade County are Parks and Recreational, Coastal Water Bays and Oceans and Residential (Table 2-1). There has not been a significant change in land use throughout Miami-Dade County; however, between 2009 and 2014, the amount of undeveloped land decreased by 36 percent (36%).

Future growth is governed by the Miami-Dade County Comprehensive Development Master Plan (CDMP), which includes the adopted plans of the CDMP Land Use Element and established land use and zoning patterns, as well as the County's policy regarding future zoning and land use patterns. The CDMP controls growth so that the expansion of the urban area occurs according to the following guidelines:

- At a rate commensurate with projected population and economic growth.
- In a contiguous pattern centered around a network of high-intensity urban centers, well connected by multimodal intra-urban transportation facilities.
- In locations which optimize efficiency in public service delivery and conservation of valuable natural resources.



Legend MDT Bus Routes Urban Development Boundary

Figure 2-1: MDT Service Area Coverage

Miami Dade Transit Bus Service Area Coverage. Source: Miami-Dade Transit, November 2013





Legend Existing Land Use Residential Commerical and Service Hotel/Motel Industrial Institutional Parks and Recreation Transportation, Communication, and Utilities Agriculture Inland Water Coastal Water Bays and Ocean Urban Development Boundary Highway

Figure 2-2: Existing Land Use Map

Existing Land Use. Source: Miami Dade County GIS, September 2013





**Table 2-1: Miami-Dade County Land Uses** 

	20	14
Land Use	Area (Acres)	Percentage
Parks & Recreation	833,552	53.8%
Coastal Water Bays and Ocean	282,387	18.2%
Residential	111,652	7.2%
Transportation, Communication, Utilities	87,438	5.6%
Undeveloped	86,293	5.6%
Agriculture	63,543	4.1%
Inland Water	36,932	2.4%
Industrial	17,722	1.1%
Institutional	14,632	0.9%
Commercial and Service	13,656	0.9%
Hotel/Motel	889	0.1%
TOTAL	1,548,696	100%

Source: Miami-Dade County GIS Department, 2014.

The objectives and policies in the Land Use Element of the CDMP emphasize concentration and intensification of future development around activity and urban centers located in areas having high county-wide multimodal accessibility and along linking major transit corridors.

The CDMP establishes that developments/redevelopments throughout Miami-Dade County are to be planned and developed in a manner that support transit use and alternative transportation modes that accommodate a concentration and variety of uses and activities which will attract large numbers of both residents and visitors. Specifically, in planned or existing transit corridors and urban centers, developments must be planned and designed to promote transit-oriented development, transit use, and a pedestrian-friendly environment.

# 2.2 Miami-Dade County Transportation System

Miami-Dade County has 11 principal arterials as defined from the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) Functional Classification designations. Interstate 95 (I-95) is the main north-south highway throughout the county. This highway begins South of Brickell in Downtown Miami and extends north into Broward County. The Palmetto Expressway (SR 826), Interstate 75 (I-75), (SR 93) and Florida's Turnpike (SR 821) are also major expressways that extend throughout Miami-Dade County. The Miami-Dade Expressway Authority (MDX) manages five (5) tolled expressways [Dolphin Expressway (SR 836), Gratigny Expressway (SR 924), Airport Expressway (SR 112), Don Shula Expressway (SR 874), and Snapper Creek Expressway (SR 878)]. Figure 2-3 and Table 2-32 present the principal interstate, freeway, and expressway arterials found in Miami-Dade County.

Legend Principal Arterial-Interstate - URBAN Principal Arterial-Freeways and Expressways - URBAN

Figure 2-3: Miami-Dade County Interstates, Freeways, and Expressways

Interstates, Freeways and Expressways. Source: FDOT Functional Classification, September 2013





Table 2-2: Miami-Dade County Principal Interstate, Freeway, and Expressway Arterials

Principal Arterials	Direction	No of Lanes
Florida's Turnpike (SR 821)	North-South	2/4/5/6/7/8/9/10
Don Shula Expressway (SR 874)	North-South	4/5/6/7/8
Interstate (I-75) (SR 93)	North-South	5/7/8
Palmetto Expressway (SR 826)	North-South	3/4/5/6/7/8/9/10/11/12
Interstate (I-95)	North-South	2/4/6/7/8/10
Snapper Creek Expressway (SR 878)	East-West	2/3/4
Dolphin Expressway (SR 836)	East-West	3/4/5/6/7/8/9
MacArthur Causeway (I-395)	East-West	2/3/4/5/6
Airport Expressway (SR 112)/ Julia Tuttle Causeway (I-195)	East-West	3/4/5/6/8
Gratigny Expressway (SR 924)	East-West	6/7/8
William H. Lehman Causeway (NE 192nd St) (SR 856)	East-West	4/6

Source: FDOT Number of Lanes, June 2010.

# 2.2.1 Miami-Dade County Street Grid System

Miami-Dade County is comprised of a contiguous street grid system that stretches from downtown Miami throughout other regions of the county. The street grid system was created with Flagler Street as the originating base street going east-west and Miami Avenue as the north-south originating base avenue. The street grid is primarily numerical such that all street addresses north of Flagler Street and west of Miami Avenue have NW in their address (e.g. NW 27th Avenue) likewise for the other quadrants. In Miami-Dade County, the Northwest (NW) and Southwest (SW) quadrants are much larger than the Southeast (SE) and Northeast (NE) quadrants. Many major roads are also named in addition to the numerical numbering system.

### 2.2.2 Roadway Capacity

Miami-Dade County's urbanized area experiences high levels of congestion on its roadways due to population growth and land use development patterns. Level of service maps are developed based on the volume to capacity (v/c) ratio which is a common measure of effectiveness utilized in the analysis of transportation systems. The volume is the daily traffic expected on a particular roadway. The roadway capacity is the maximum number of vehicles that can travel through a given point during a specified period under prevailing roadway, traffic and control conditions.

The v/c ratio analysis is based on best available count data describing existing conditions. The Arterial Grid Analysis Phase II Study prepared the LOS for Existing Conditions along non-State section line and half-section line corridor segments in 2011/2012 (Figure 2-4) applied methodologies established by FDOT's Quality/Level of Service Handbook for daily roadway volumes and capacities.





Legend Level of Service C or Better Municipalities Unincorporated Miami-Dade County

Figure 2-4: Level of Service (2011/2012)

Arterial Grid Analysis Study - Phase II - Existing Conditions Level of Service (2011/12). Source: MPO Arterial Grid Analysis Study, 2014





Figure 2-4 highlights the estimated v/c ratios for the roadways operating at level of service<sup>1</sup> (LOS) up to LOS F when the projected demand exceeded the capacity of the roadway for 2011 and 2012. A transportation facility operating at LOS F implies failing or heavy congested conditions.

# 2.3 Demographic and Economic Analysis

This section reviews the area of Miami-Dade County which includes a physical description of the study area, population profile and trends, demographic characteristics, and journey-to-work characteristics. A series of maps are included to illustrate select population, demographic, and journey-to-work characteristics. The primary data sources include the 2010 Census and 2008-2012 American Community Survey Data, both represent the most comprehensive current available information. Traffic Analysis Zone (TAZ) data was used as an additional source for the creation of the demographic maps within this section.

#### 2.3.1 Data Sources

#### **United States Census**

The U.S. Census is a federal program conducted every ten years and is focused on gathering social and economic characteristics of the population. In addition, the Census collects physical and financial characteristics of households. U.S. Census data used within this section is from the year 2010.

# **American Community Survey (ACS)**

The ACS is a part of U.S. Census Bureau's Decennial Census Program and designed to provide more current and detailed demographic, social, economic, and housing estimates throughout the decade. The ACS is sent to a small percentage of the population on a rotating basis and asks more questions than the decennial census. Each year the survey randomly samples around 3.5 million addresses and produces statistics that cover 1-year, 3-year and 5-year periods for geographic areas in the United States and Puerto Rico. The 5-year estimate data set was utilized to provide a more detailed snapshot into the demographic and economic characteristics within Miami-Dade County as a whole.

In December 2013, ACS provided a five-year estimate (based on data collected in five consecutive years). This document sources the ACS 2008-2012 five-year estimates for analytic purposes to provide a more comprehensive descriptive average of demographic and economic conditions during this time period. To help understand the assumptions of the five-year estimates the following characteristics for this type of estimates is as follows:

- Published for all geographic areas including those with populations under 20,000.
- Represent the average characteristics over the five-year period of time.

<sup>1</sup> LOS A and B reflect excellent condition (no delay); LOS C and D are considered satisfactory (some delay); LOS E indicated the presence of significant congestion (major delay); and LOS F reflects substantial congestion.

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- Have larger sample size than the one-year and three-year estimates.
- More precise than the one and three-year estimates.

ACS five-year estimates were used for this analysis since it is recognized as a second tier reliable source of economic and demographic data.

# 2.3.2 Miami-Dade County Population Characteristics

According to ACS estimates for 2012, Miami-Dade County was the most populous county in Florida and the eighth (8<sup>th</sup>) most populous county in the nation. Miami-Dade County has experienced population growth of ten percent (10%) or approximately 240,000 people from Census estimates spanning from 2000 to 2010. Population growth since 2000 has steadily impacted Miami-Dade County, as well as, the greater South Florida region (Table 2-3). Census population estimates indicate that growth in Miami-Dade County continues and increased by one percent (1%) from 2010 to 2012.

Table 2-3: South Florida Population Growth, 2000-2012

County	2000	2010	Percent Growth (2000-2010)	2012 Population Estimate	Percent Growth (2010-2012)
Miami-Dade	2,253,400	2,496,435	10%	2,512,219	1%
Broward	1,623,000	1,748,066	7%	1,761,993	1%
Palm Beach	1,131,200	1,320,134	14%	1,324,085	0%

Source: U.S. Census 2010, 2008-2012 American Community Survey.

The median population density of Miami-Dade County is about 5,620 persons per square mile in 2010 (Figure 2-5a). Density throughout the report is calculated based upon current demographic data provided from the Miami-Dade County Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO).

#### 2.3.3 Miami-Dade County Employment Characteristics

The median employment density of Miami-Dade County is about 1,810 persons per square mile in 2010 (Figure 2-5b). Employment density for the year 2010 in this report is calculated based on South East Regional Planning Model (SERPM 6.7 version).





Legend Bus Route 0 - 2,999 3,000 - 8,999 9,000 - 17,999 18,000 - 39,999 >39,999

Figure 2-5a: Miami-Dade County Population Density, 2010

Population Density per Square Mile. Source: Miami-Dade MPO, October 2013





Legend Bus Route 0 - 2,000 2,001 - 4,000 4,001 - 8,000 8,001 - 10,000 >10,000

Figure 2-5b: Miami-Dade County Employment Density, 2010

Employment Density per Square Mile. Source: SERPM 6.7 Model



# 2.3.4 Age Distribution Characteristics

In 2010, Miami-Dade County had a relatively young population with the median age of 38 years old. The age distribution revealed that persons age 18 years and younger made up 22 percent (22%) of the population. Elderly residents age 65 years and over made up 14 percent (14%)

Table 2-4: Age Distribution Characteristics, 2008-2012

Population	18 and Under (%)	65 Years and Over (%)	Median Age		
	2010 Census				
2,496,435	22%	14%	38		
2008-2012 ACS Estimates					
2,512,219	22%	14%	38		

Source: U.S. Census 2010, 2008-2012 American Community Survey.

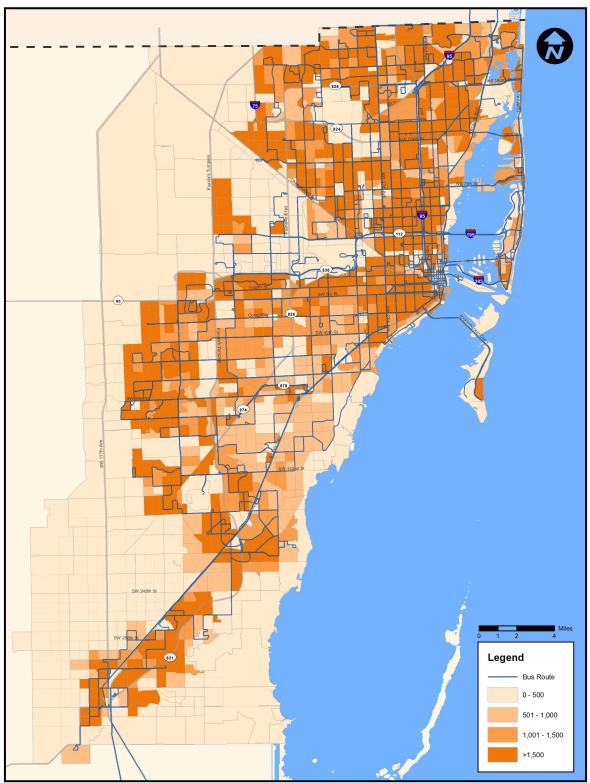
Trends remained consistent during the 2008-2012 time periods. The percentage of 18 years old and younger remained at 22 percent (22%), the percentage of over 65 years and older remained at 14 percent (14%) and the median age remained at 38 years of age.

Figure 2-6 illustrates youth population density and Figure 2-7 illustrates the elderly population density in Miami-Dade County.





Figure 2-6: Miami-Dade County Population Density under 18 Years of Age

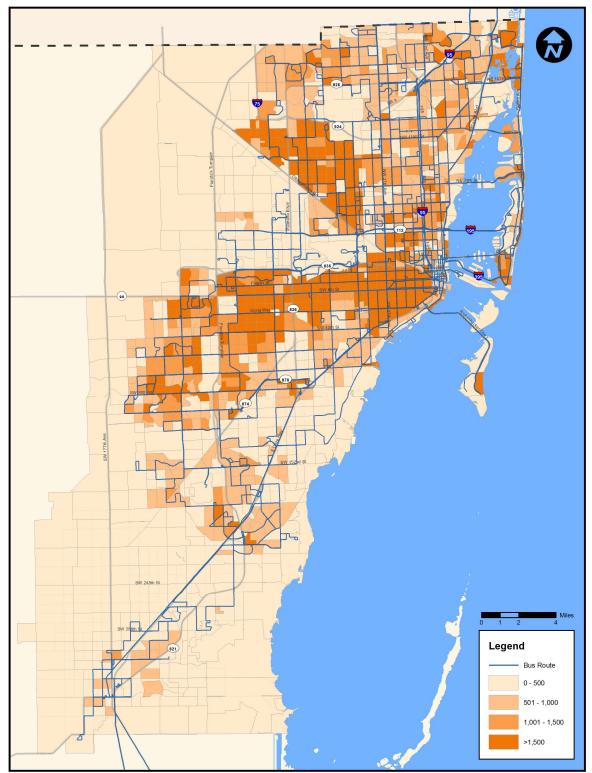


Population Density Under 18 Years of Age. Source: Miami-Dade MPO, October 2013





Figure 2-7: Miami-Dade County Population Density age 65 Years and Over



Population Density 65 Years of Age and Over. Source: Miami-Dade MPO, October 2013





#### 2.3.5 Household Characteristics

The 2010 Census reported Miami-Dade County had 867,350 households with an average household size of three (3) persons. Households with children (36%) comprised the majority of households within the county. One person households (30%) and households with elderly (30%) also represent a large portion of the total number of county households. (Table 2-5)

Table 2-5: Miami-Dade County Household Characteristics, 2008-2012

Households (HH)	Average HH size	1-Person HH	HH with children	HH with elderly
2010 Census				
867,352	3.00	30%	36%	30%
2008-2012 ACS Estimates				
826,179	3.00	31%	35%	29%

Source: U.S. Census 2010, 2008-2012 American Community Survey.

Notes: HH=household. 1 person HH refers to 1 person non-family household. HH with children are considered HH with one or more persons age 18 years and younger. HH with elderly are considered HH with one or more persons age 65 years and over.

Household characteristics changed slightly during the period of 2008-2012 according to ACS five-year estimates. It was during this period that the estimated number of Miami-Dade County households decreased by about 41,000 to 826,200 households with an average household size of three (3) persons.

The types of households in Miami-Dade County were comprised of various family types. The majority of households (35%) continued to be those with children age 18 and younger, but experienced a slight decrease from 2010 estimates. Following closely were 1-person households slightly increased to 31 percent (31%) and households with elderly slightly decreased to 29 percent (29%) of all county households.

### **Miami-Dade County Housing Density**

Miami-Dade County is primarily considered a community of single-family homes. However, there is a high concentration of condominiums in the downtown and Miami Beach urban core and along the Atlantic coastline. This development pattern is due to the lack of available land within the urban development boundary and the continued redevelopment of urban centers. Miami-Dade County offers high-density living in the downtown and many urbanized areas. Median housing densities based upon MPO 2010 data is 1,759 households per square mile as presented in Figure 2-8.





Legend 1,200 - 3,499 3,500 - 7,499 7,500 - 15,699 >15,699

Figure 2-8: Miami-Dade County Housing Density (2010)

Housing Density per Square Mile. Source: Miami-Dade MPO, October 2013

#### 2.3.6 Racial and Ethnic Characteristics

Miami-Dade County is one of the most diverse regions in the state of Florida in terms of race and ethnicity. In 2010, for people reporting one race alone, 74 percent (74%) were white and 23 percent (23%) non-white. From 2008-2012, the percentage of whites increased to 75 percent (75%) and non-white increased to 24 percent (24%). The Hispanic community comprised more than half of the entire population in both 2010 (63%) and during 2008-2012 (65%). The Hispanic community includes persons of Hispanic origin of any race and remains the largest ethnic group represented in Miami-Dade County. (Table 2-6)

Table 2-6: Miami-Dade County Racial Characteristics, 2008-2012

Population	Percent White	Percent Non-white	Percent Hispanic	
2010 Census				
2,496,435	74	23	63	
2010-2012 ACS Estimates				
2,512,219	75	24	65	

Source: U.S. Census 2010, 2008-2012 American Community Survey.

#### 2.3.7 Travel Time to Work

Table 2-7 shows the distribution of workers by industry for Miami-Dade County. Travel times commuting back and forth to work are steadily increasing throughout the South Florida region. A majority of residents living in western regions of the county reported travel times between 30 to 45 minutes. This reveals that residents are spending longer amounts of time commuting in traffic to reach employment centers everyday. Figure 2-9 and Figure 2-10 illustrates commute time to work.

Table 2-7: Miami-Dade County Distribution of Workers by Industry, 2008-2012

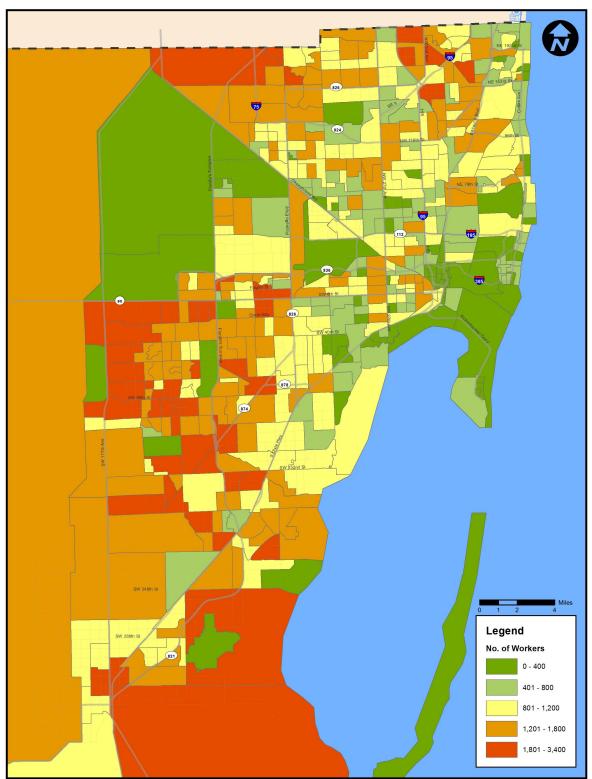
0.7%
7.2%
5.1%
4.3%
12.4%
7.1%
2.2%
7.5%
12.4%
20.2%
10.5%
6.3%
3.8%

Source: 2008-2012 American Community Survey. Note: Estimates include civilians employed in population age 16 years and over only.





Figure 2-9: Miami-Dade County Commute Times Greater than 30 Minutes in 2010

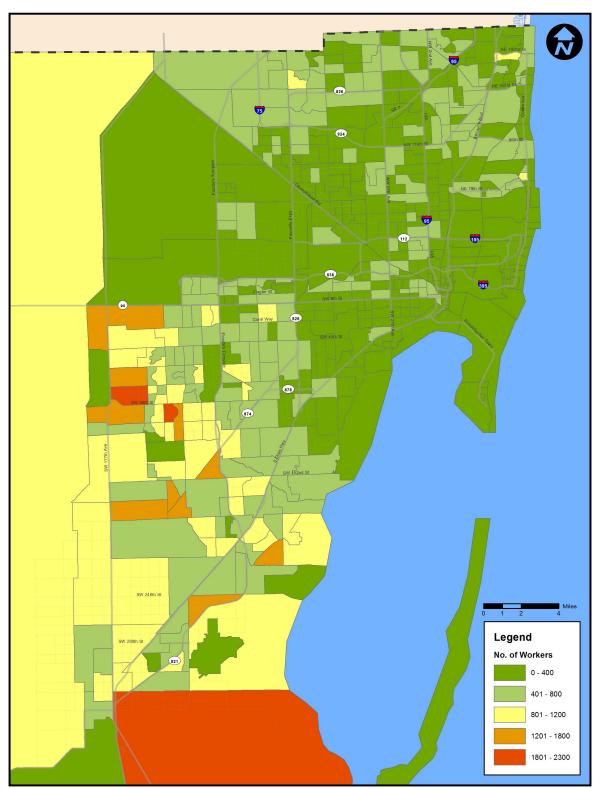


Workers (Age 16 and Over) with Commute Times Greater than 30 minutes. Source: ACS 5 yr (2008-2010) data at Census tract level.





Figure 2-10: Miami-Dade County Commute Times Greater than 45 Minutes in 2010



Workers (Age 16 and over) with Commute Times Greater than 45 minutes. Source: ACS 5 yr (2008-2010) data at Census tract level.



# 2.3.8 Transportation Disadvantaged Population Characteristics

Transportation Disadvantaged (TD) populations refer to special populations that are most likely to benefit from improved and expanded transit services provided by MDT. Chapter 427 of the Florida Statutes defines transportation disadvantaged (TD) persons as:

"Those persons who because of physical or mental disability, income status, or age are unable to transport themselves or to purchase transportation and are, therefore, dependent upon others to obtain access to health care, employment, education, shopping, social activities, or children who are handicapped or "high-risk" or "at-risk" as defined in s.411.202 F.S."

Persons within this population often rely on public transit as the major motorized form of transportation. The US Census provides four categories that describe TD populations to include:

- Families below Poverty Level
- Zero Vehicle Population
- Mobility Limited
- Elderly persons age 65 and older

Table 2-68 presents the Miami-Dade County Transportation Disadvantaged Characteristics between 2008 and 2012. This segment of the population has remained unchanged based on the ACS data with the exception of a slight increase in the disabled population segment.

Table 2-8: Miami-Dade County Transportation Disadvantaged Characteristics, 2008-2012

Population	Families Below Poverty	Disabled	Zero Vehicle Population	Elderly Age 65 and older
2010 ACS Estimates				
2,496,435	16%	12%	5%	14%
2008-2012 ACS Estimates				
2,512,219	16%	13%	5%	14%

Source: American Community Survey 2008-2012, American Community Survey 2010.

Note: Disabled: Civilian non institutionalized individuals of age 18 years and or older who have long lasting sensory, physical, mental or emotional conditions and independent living difficulty. Zero vehicle population include workers who are 16 years of age and over in households with zero vehicle availability.

#### 2.3.9 Employment

The Miami-Dade County employment industry spans many different fields and industries. The major public and private employers within Miami-Dade County are presented in Table 2-9 represent a broad cross-section of industries including educational, government, and healthcare industries. According to ACS estimates, the five (5) major industries within Miami Dade County include educational and health care





services (20.2%), professional, scientific, and management (12.4%), retail trade (12.4%), arts, entertainment recreation (10.5%), and finance, insurance, and real estate (7.5%).

Despite this diverse employment culture, the Miami-Dade County population includes factions of residents which are economically disadvantaged, children at-risk, disabled community, seniors, unemployed, the homeless, and adults at-risk. There are over 130,000 economically disadvantaged seniors and approximately 5,000 Social Security [SSI & SSDI] enrolled in the Golden Passport program; approximately 300,000 Medicaid recipients, and approximately 25,000 enrolled in the Special Transportation Services program for the disabled.

**Table 2-9: Miami-Dade County Major Employers** 

Public Employers		Private Employers	
Organization	Employment	Organization	Employment
Miami-Dade Public Schools	48,571	University of Miami	16,000
Miami-Dade County	29,000	Baptist Health South Florida	13,376
Federal Government	19,500	Publix Super Markets	10,800
Florida State Government	17,100	American Airlines	9,000
Jackson Health System	12,571	Precision Response Corporation	5,000
Florida International University	8,000	Florida Power & Light Company	3,840
Miami-Dade College	6,200	Carnival Cruise Lines	3,500
City of Miami	4,309	Winn-Dixie Stores	3,400
Homestead AFB	2,700	AT&T	3,100
Miami V A Healthcare System	2,385	Mount Sinai Medical Center	3,000

Source: Beacon Council Website, 2014.

#### 2.3.10 Income Characteristics

In 2010, Miami-Dade County median household income averaged approximately \$40,219. Family poverty levels and households participating in government programs were 16 percent (16%) and seven percent (7%) respectively. The numbers of persons working in the labor force in 2010 were estimated to be slightly less than half of the total population (49%).

During 2008-2012, income characteristics in Miami-Dade County experienced moderate growth (Table 2-10). The median household income rose from year 2010 levels at \$40,200 to \$43,500. However, the number of families living below poverty (16%) and receiving public assistance (7%) decreased slightly although the percentages stayed the same. Most noteworthy is that a greater proportion of the population is gainfully employed in the labor force and was estimated to be about 51 percent (51%) of the population.



Table 2-10: Miami-Dade County Income Characteristics, 2008-2012

Households (HH)	Median HH Income	Families Below Poverty	Per Capita Income	HH receiving Public Assistance	In Labor Force	
	2010 ACS Estimates					
809,689	\$40,219	16%	\$20,970	7%	49%	
2008-2012 ACS Estimates						
826,179	\$43,464	16%	\$23,304	7%	51%	

Source: 2010, 2008-2012 American Community Survey.

Note: 2010 Estimates for Median HH Income and Per Capita income represent 2009 inflation-adjusted dollars. 2008-2012 Estimates for Median HH income and per capita income is represented in 2012 inflation-adjusted dollars. Labor force represents the population 16 years and over. Public assistance includes food stamp benefits and cash public assistance income.

# 2.3.11 Zero Vehicle Populations

The ACS indicates the number of vehicles available to each household. From this data, the percentage of the population with no vehicles available for personal use is available and identifies a segment of the population most likely to use transit services. These households may result from a personal choice to not own a vehicle, physical ability to operate a vehicle, or the lack of financial means by which to own a vehicle. In 2010, the zero vehicle population households made up 11 percent (11%) of occupied households in Miami-Dade County. There was no change in the percentage of households with no vehicle from 2010 to 2012 (Table 2-11).

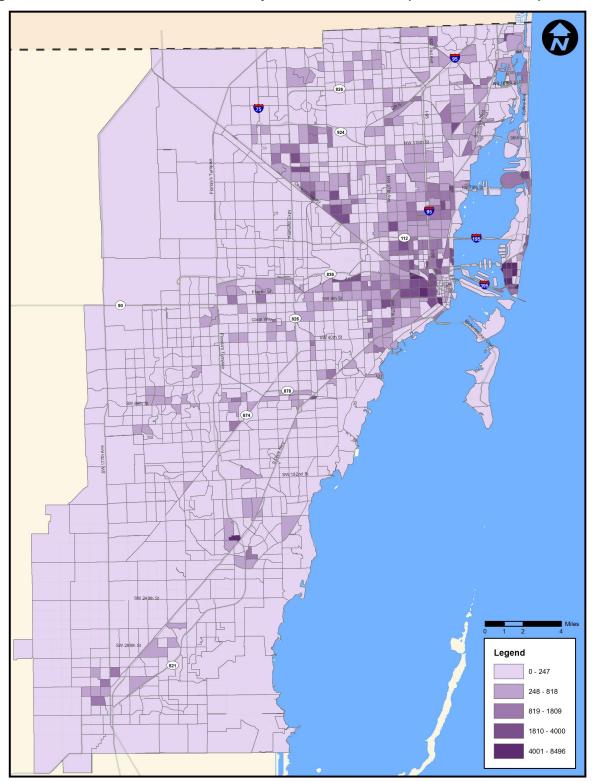
ACS five-year (2008-2010) vehicle data is only available at the Census Tract level (Census Tract level files do not align properly with the base map), for this reason the Census Transportation Planning Product (CTPP) five-year (2006-2010) data at the Census TAZ level shapefile were integrated with the Miami-Dade MPO's Census TAZ shapefiles to illustrate zero car household densities in Miami-Dade County as shown in Figure 2-11.

Table 2-11: Number of Vehicles Available, 2008-2012

Hausahalda	Number of Vehicles Available				
Households	0 1 2 3+				
2010 ACS Estimates					
809,689	11%	40%	35%	14%	
2008-2012 ACS Estimates					
826,179	11%	40%	35%	14%	

Source: 2010, 2008-2012 American Community Survey.

Figure 2-11: Zero Car Household Density, CTPP 2006 – 2010 (Census TAZ Level)



Zero Car Households Density per Square Mile. Source: CTPP 2006 - 2010, Miami Dade MPO October 2013.





# 2.3.12 Mobility Limited

An important component of understanding TD populations is the identification of the number of mobility limited persons residing within Miami-Dade County. For the mobility limited, the transit dependence stems from the inability to go outside of the home alone. This category does not include persons that are institutionalized and would otherwise not leave the home without assistance (for example, persons in a nursing home).

In 2010, a total of six percent (6%) of Miami-Dade County's population age 18 and over were considered mobility limited. According to average estimates compiled from the Census for the time period between 2008 and 2012, a total of five percent (5%) of county residents were mobility limited. The number of mobility limited elderly persons age 65 and over in the county during this same period was estimated at three percent (3%). (Table 2-12)

**Table 2-12: Mobility Limited Populations, 2008-2012** 

Population	18 to 64 years	65 and over		
2010 ACS Estimates				
2,496,435	2%	4%		
2008-2012 ACS Estimates				
2,512,219	2%	3%		

Source: 2010, 2008-2012 American Community Survey.





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